

20 July 1960

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director/Plans

SUBJECT: NIS Coverage Relative to Political Action Analysis

The considerable extent to which the National Intelligence Surveys provide on-hand basic intelligence relating to the items in your 13 July list for political action analysis is conveniently indicated in the attached NIS Reference Guide.

Topical relationships in many instances are evident from the titles of NIS components shown under "Content of NIS Units" beginning on page 8 of the Reference Guide. The initial item describes Chapter I of the NIS as a concise but comprehensive over-view of an NIS area as a whole, from which users can proceed to the more detailed treatment of major subject categories in Chapters II through IX. Topical relationships as in the case of NIS Chapter IV (Sociological) and Chapter V (Political) are more extensively indicated by the summaries of the content of each NIS unit, which are brief resumes of the detailed information on NIS requirements and content as set forth in the NIS Standard Instructions.

In the case of Chapter IV, as an example, in Section 42 (Characteristics of the People) -- one of the seven topical sections of the chapter -- will be found basic information on the population's physical and social characteristics as affected by physical environment and historical factors; cultural homogeneity or complexity; languages; national outlook, trends, and attitudes of the people; social structure; social values and patterns; group relations and personality types. In many instances, of course, useful reference extends to similar topics in the NIS for politically or geographically related other NIS areas.

Other topical relationships which are not so immediately apparent are pointed up in the Correlation Guide (pages 17-28 of the attached). This listing, which has been found of major value for users of the Surveys, for each NIS topical unit suggests other topical units to which reference can be made for pertinent information.

As the front material in the Reference Guide indicates, the objective in the long-range NIS mission is to provide content which incorporates evaluation as well as factual data but, consistent with the nature of the program, the NIS does not undertake estimative projections or to perform the function of other community material designed to keep fully abreast of latest developments or to serve detailed operational needs. Experience has shown that consistent users readily develop an understanding of the NIS as basic intelligence and its complementary relationship to publications of a more operational or current intelligence character.

The Reference Guide identifies all NIS areas and topical units by the code numbering system used in the NIS program, and facilitates obtaining desired material from accession sources. The Quarterly Report in the pocket in the back cover of the Guide shows which NIS Chapters and other units have been published, and those currently in process of publication.

Reference to the Guide will provide a general picture of the nature and scope of the NIS, but basically is an initial step in obtaining pertinent published NIS units for examination of their substantive content in terms of user requirements. In this connection the Office of Basic Intelligence, which in twelve years has monitored the publication of more than 4,800 units, can be freely called upon for suggestions and assistance based on extensive experience with effective use of the NIS by members of the community and other Government activities.

Robert Amory, Jr.
Deputy Director/Intelligence

Enclosure:
NIS Reference Guide